

A Comparative Analysis of the 2006 and 2018 Undergraduate Programs of Teaching Turkish

Funda ORGE YASAR¹

Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Çanakkale, Turkey

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to analyze the Turkish Teaching Undergraduate Program implemented since 2006-2007 academic year and the Turkish Teaching Undergraduate Program for 2018, introduced from the autumn semester of 2018-2019 academic year, by comparing their various particulars and dimensions. In the research, the document examination qualitative research method was used.

The updated program consists of courses on Pedagogical Knowledge (33%), General Knowledge (18%) and Subject Knowledge (49%). The Updated Undergraduate Program has been supplemented with Pedagogical Knowledge courses and is thus much stronger. In the updated program, General Knowledge courses retain their prior dominance. Nevertheless, Subject Knowledge courses have been decreased in terms of total hours at theoretical and practical levels as well as in the number of credits (TPC) compared to the former Undergraduate Program. One of the positive amendments made in the updated program is expanding the “Teaching Practice” course over a longer time span. As a result, the program is compatible with the Turkish Language Education Program (grades 1-8) planned and implemented by the Turkish Ministry of Education and inclusive of elective courses as well as a pool of relevant elective courses.

Keywords: 2006 Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish, 2018 Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish, Pedagogical Knowledge courses, General Knowledge courses, Subject Knowledge courses.

DOI: 10.29329/epasr.2019.201.6

¹ Assist. Prof. Dr, Department of Turkish Language Teaching, Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Çanakkale, Turkey,
Email: fundaorge@comu.edu.tr, ORCID: 0000-0002-8207-9685

Introduction

“Teachers play a critical role in the socialization of person, transference of social culture and values to younger generations and raising awareness among individuals and the community” (Keklik, 2013, p. 1913). Given the tasks assigned above, teachers are indisputably the lead actors in the education system.

The very first steps toward teacher training in Turkey can be traced back 171 years. One of the most important advances in the history of Turkish education was the founding of the Darülmualimîn (Teacher Training College) in Istanbul during the reign of Sultan Abdülmecit in 1848 as the first establishment to train prospective teachers. This college offered instruction for male teachers only for a period of three years. In its curriculum, the most noticeable point is that the first course was a teaching methodology course called *Lecturing and Teaching Methods* and other courses subsequently followed this course (Akyüz, 2005). In due course, female teachers were needed to be employed in elementary schools for girls; hence the earliest college to train such teachers, named Darülmualimat, was founded in 1870 during the reign of Sultan Abdülaziz (Akyüz, 2006; Altın, 2017).

“When we take a closer look at teacher training institutes of the post-1923 Republican era, it is evident that from its establishment up to that date, teacher training has been executed by educational institutes at different stages of formal education in a myriad of types and levels” (Atanur Başkan, Aydın & Madden, 2006, p. 36). In this context, primary-education schools, two-year educational institutes, schools for village teachers, courses for village trainers, and village institutes were commissioned to train prospective teachers for elementary schools. Three-year education institutes were commissioned to educate prospective teachers of secondary-education schools and higher teacher-training schools were assigned to train the prospective teachers of high schools (Korkmaz, Bağçeci, Meşe & Ünsal 2013; Akdemir 2013; Atanur Başkan 2001; Dursunoğlu 2003; YÖK 2007a).

“In Turkey, teacher training institutes have been operating since the establishment of the Republic (1923) and in 1982 they were affiliated with the Ministry of Education” (Öztürk, 2007, p. 306). “As of 1982, the Higher Education Law (no. 2547) transformed higher education teacher training institutes into faculties and incorporated them in universities” (MEB, 2010, p. 57). Nonetheless, “universities were inexperienced in teacher training and university boards were decidedly not yet ready to achieve this vital mission” (Kavcar, 2002, p. 5). However, transferring the responsibility for teacher training to universities provided a favorable environment for academic research and producing scholarly knowledge.

At national level, universities lacked a joint program to implement in teacher training. “It is seen that after a hiatus of 15 years, it was only in 1997 that YÖK was able to eventually tackle this major issue” (Kavcar, 2002, p. 5). “In Turkey, the Law passed on 16.08.1997 (no. 4306) applied to the 1997-1998 academic year effected eight-year compulsory elementary education, which triggered a rising demand for class and branch teachers. In response, this fueled attempts to restructure education

faculties and an updated program was applied in the 1998-1999 academic year” (Küçükahmet, 2007, p. 205).

“In the previous decade, the Ministry of Education, universities, and non-governmental organizations held symposiums, panels, workshops, forums, conferences and academic activities to discuss whether the teacher training programs in faculties of education were competent enough to train prospective teachers equipped with modern skills and knowledge and suggestions to solve the problems of these programs were shared in line with data from scholarly research and the views of experts in the field” (YÖK, 2006, p. 4).

As a result, in order to alleviate the defects in undergraduate programs of teacher training, a range of actions was taken to implement the required revisions. Finally, on July 21, 2006, the YÖK General Board approved new undergraduate Teacher Training programs at Faculties of Education, to be put into effect as of the 2006-2007 academic year (YÖK, 2007b). It was then resolved that, percentage-wise, undergraduate programs of teacher training would comprise 50-60% subject knowledge and skills courses, 25-30% pedagogical knowledge and skills courses, and 15-20% general knowledge courses.

Within the framework of these updating measures; “it was detected that there was a lack of program evaluation and corresponding process for program development; therefore, there was a search to find pro-tem shortcut solutions to eliminate these defects” (Atik Kara & Sağlam, 2014, p. 29). Unfortunately, these endeavors failed to have the desired effect.

Structural changes put into place in response to social needs and demands in the Turkish educational system were related to restructuring faculties of education/educational sciences to function with departments and sub-departments and it became mandatory to revise undergraduate programs of teacher training. As a result, firstly the templates of departments and sub-departments were restructured through the 28.02.2017 resolution of YÖK’s General Board, and the new templates were transmitted to universities. Essential updates were then implemented in the relevant faculties and institutes (YÖK, 2018, p. 7).

Reasons for updating the teacher training undergraduate programs that became effective in the academic year of 2018-2019 can be listed as follows [YÖK (Higher Education Institution), 2018: 7-11]:

1. Emergence of the need to eliminate differentiation between elementary teaching and junior high school teaching in the names of faculty departments.
2. The need to harmonize teacher training undergraduate programs with teaching programs being prepared and implemented by the Ministry of National Education.
3. Emergence of the need to educate teacher candidates suitably equipped with respect to social, cultural, moral and intellectual aspects and having a developed personality as well as being

sufficiently equipped with professional (pedagogical) information and skills related to their subjects within the frame of the new undergraduate program.

4. Emergence of the need to update undergraduate programs to conform with new competencies and objectives declared within the frame of the General Competencies of Teaching Profession prepared and published in 2017 and the Teacher's Strategy Certificate.

5. Implementation of the Competencies outlined within the frame of new Turkish Higher Education Competencies, whereas former competencies were related subject education sciences and teacher training.

6. The need for harmonization with Bologna Process quality and accreditation in the field of higher education.

7. The need to establish core programs for undergraduate programs providing education in the same area in Turkey.

8. Existence of the need to have optional courses (minimum 25%) in undergraduate programs within the context of the Bologna Process.

9. The need to eliminate non-conformities in the national credits and AKTSs of Pedagogical Teaching Knowledge (PK) and General Knowledge courses (GK) (YOK, 2018: 8-11). Reasons for the new features in the updated teacher training undergraduate programs are as follows:

It is expected that teacher candidates graduating from teacher training undergraduate programs will graduate as teachers adopting universal, national, and domestic values, as well as professional ethics, and having gained the characteristics of being informed, technologically literate and research-orientated. Furthermore, new undergraduate programs have been structured on the basis of gaining skills, attitudes and values. Within the context of new undergraduate programs, subject knowledge and pedagogical knowledge courses have been re-determined and they are now reflected in the relevant undergraduate programs. In addition, the "Teaching Application" course has been restructured and will be given in two semesters (the academic year in Turkey consists of two semesters, not three or more) in order to give students the chance to carry out more practice in schools.

Gaining knowledge and skills relating to subject knowledge and teaching in teacher training undergraduate programs is among the leading priorities. In language education undergraduate program courses, a standard was determined among the programs with respect to course names and content. By making the total credits of new undergraduate programs match international standards, harmonization with the Bologna Process was also ensured at the same time. Again, in all programs, non-conformities in national credits and AKTSs of Pedagogical Teaching Knowledge (PK) and General Knowledge (GK) courses have been eliminated. In addition to adding optional courses in new undergraduate programs starting from the 3rd half-year, by also leaving room for optional lessons with a ratio of 1/4 in all undergraduate programs, education plans have been harmonized with the Bologna Process.

One of the teacher training undergraduate programs being applied starting from the first classes of the 2018-2019 academic year is the Turkish Teaching Undergraduate Program. Examination of New Turkish Teaching Undergraduate Program, in all its different dimensions, constitutes the subject of this research.

Aim of the Study

The purpose of this study is to compare the Turkish Teaching Undergraduate Program that was implemented from the academic year 2006-2007 and the new Turkish Teaching Undergraduate Program which began to be implemented in the academic year 2018-2019. Aimed at determining differences between the relevant programs, this comprehensive study covers the number and variety of courses, obligatory and optional courses, course hours and credits, semester in which the course is given, and which courses were removed from the program and replaced with the new courses. To analyze the strong and weak aspects of the New Turkish Teaching Undergraduate Program and to make proposals for eliminating relevant deficiencies is also part of this study's objectives.

Method

To determine the differences between the Turkish Teaching Undergraduate Program for 2006-2007 and the Turkish Teaching Undergraduate Program for 2018-2019, a qualitative research method was used. Qualitative research is where “Qualitative data collection methods such as observations, discussions and document analysis are used and which aim to reveal perceptions and events in a realistic and integrative form in a natural environment” (Yıldırım & Şimşek 2008, p. 39). In gathering the data, document examination has been used as the method, since it covers “The process of finding, reading, note-taking and evaluation of sources for a specific purpose” (Karasar, 2008, p. 183).

In the following stages of this study, the 2006 Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish will be referred to as the *Former Undergraduate Program* while the 2018 Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish will be referred to as the *Updated Undergraduate Program*. When both programs are mentioned, Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish will be the referent phrase.

Findings and Discussion

In this part of the study, comparative findings and interpretation with respect to the content of the Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish programs will be itemized including the number and categories of courses, course hours and course credits, compulsory and elective courses, course hours-credits, changes of semester, and courses removed and replaced. Evaluation of compulsory courses recently added to the Updated Undergraduate Program and elective courses in the Updated Program will also be listed.

1. Findings and discussion of number and categories of courses

Courses in the Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish are divided into three main categories: Subject Knowledge, Pedagogical Knowledge and General Knowledge. As seen in Table 1, in the Former Undergraduate Program there were 33 Department and Subject Knowledge courses (in

the updated program, the “Department and Subject Knowledge” course was re-named the “Subject Knowledge” course), 12 Pedagogical Knowledge and 14 General Knowledge courses. In the Updated Undergraduate Program, on the other hand, there are 34 Subject Knowledge courses, 22 Pedagogical Knowledge courses, and 12 General Knowledge courses.

Table 1: Number and category of courses in compared programs

	Former Undergraduate Program (2006)							Updated Undergraduate Program (2018)						
	DSK		PK		GK		Total	SK		PK		GK		Total
	C	E	C	E	C	E		C	E	C	E	C	E	
1. Term	6	-	1	-	2	-	9	3	-	2	-	4	-	9
2. Term	5	-	1	-	2	-	8	4	-	2	-	3	-	9
3. Term	4	1	1	-	2	-	8	6	-	2	1	-	1	10
4. Term	5	-	1	-	2	-	8	5	1	2	1	-	1	10
5. Term	4	-	2	-	1	-	7	3	1	2	1	1	1	9
6. Term	4	-	1	-	2	-	7	3	1	2	1	-	1	8
7. Term	2	-	3	-	-	1	6	2	2	2	1	-	-	7
8. Term	-	2	2	-	1	1	6	2	1	2	1	-	-	6
Total	33		12		14		59	34		22		12		68

Source: YÖK, 2007b; YÖK, 2018

(DSK: Department and Subject Knowledge, PK: Pedagogical Knowledge, GK: General Knowledge, SK: Subject Knowledge, C: Compulsory, E: Elective)

As presented in Table 1, in the Updated Undergraduate Program there is a one unit increase in the Subject Knowledge category and two-unit decrease in General Knowledge. As seen in the Pedagogical Knowledge courses in the Updated Undergraduate Program, there is an approximate twice-fold increase in this category. Another noticeable finding is that in the Former Undergraduate Program, the total number of courses was 59, while in the Updated Undergraduate Program the total is 68. This increase in the number of courses in the Updated Undergraduate Program was achieved by converting 3-hour courses in the Former Undergraduate Program to 2-hour courses in the Updated Undergraduate Program; by which it is aimed to help students take as many different courses as possible.

2. Findings and discussion of course hours and credits

An analysis of the entire undergraduate programs of Teaching Turkish issued by YÖK reveals the number and credits of all theoretical and practical courses. Accordingly, in the Former Undergraduate Program there are 128 theoretical and 34 practical courses, totaling 162 hours/145 credits. In the Updated Undergraduate Program are 143 theoretical and 14 practical courses totaling 157 hours/150 credits (Table 2).

Table 2: Course hours and credits of courses in compared Undergraduate Programs

	Former Undergraduate Program (2006)					Updated Undergraduate Program (2018)				
	T	P	C	Hours	Credits (%)	T	P	C	Hours	Credits (%)
Pedagogical Knowledge	28	14	35	42	24	44	12	50	56	33
General Knowledge	30	6	33	36	23	26	2	27	28	18
Subject Knowledge	70	14	77	84	53	73	0	73	73	49
Total	128	34	145	162	100	143	14	150	157	100

Source: YÖK, 2007b; YÖK, 2018

(T: Theoretical course, P: Practical course, C: Credit)

As seen in Table 2, in the Former Undergraduate Program the credit ratio in the Pedagogical Knowledge category is 24%, in General Knowledge courses it is 23%, and Subject Knowledge courses are 53%. In the Updated Undergraduate Program, the credit percentage of Pedagogical Knowledge courses is 33%, General Knowledge courses 18%, and Subject Knowledge courses 49%. “Theoretical” course hours increased by one hour in the Updated Undergraduate Program, but the “practical” course hours are now less. In terms of total course hours, there is 3.1% decrease compared to the Former Undergraduate program but the decrease in “practical” course hours is noticeably lower. Engaging prospective teachers who have had practical experience is a vital issue in teacher training but, as seen, the balance between theory and practice has not been sufficiently observed.

Pedagogical Knowledge, General Knowledge and Subject Knowledge are among the basic requirements for training prospective teachers to be successful professionals. It is true that teachers who are fully equipped in terms of pedagogical know-how but not competent in subject knowledge are doomed to failure. Güzel, in his paper on the same “Four-Year Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish”, suggested a ratio of 67% on the course for subject knowledge (Güzel, 2005, in Keklik, 2013). In the Updated Undergraduate Program it is seen that subject knowledge courses decreased by 4% compared to the Former Undergraduate Program and totaled only 49%. It is evident that this is lower than the required ratio.

“It has been observed that graduates of the Turkish Language Teaching department lack competency to teach departmental courses in universities. One reason for this failure is that courses in the package program are insufficient in terms of subject knowledge and the number of departmental courses. It is not feasible to teach educational techniques without cultivating competency in subject knowledge” (Kırkkılıç & Maden, 2010, p. 484).

3. Findings and discussion of compulsory and elective courses

In the Former Undergraduate program of Teaching Turkish, elective courses were offered in Subject Knowledge and General Knowledge while in the Updated Undergraduate program, elective

courses are offered in the domains of Subject Knowledge, Pedagogical Knowledge and General Knowledge.

In Table 3 it is seen that the Former Undergraduate Program has 54 compulsory and 5 elective courses while in the Updated Program the number of compulsory courses is 52 and the number of elective courses is 16. As shown in Table 3, the number of elective courses in the Updated Undergraduate Program has multiplied more than three times. In the domains of both Subject Knowledge and Pedagogical Knowledge there are six elective courses while General Culture has four elective courses.

Table 3. Comparison of Compulsory and Elective courses in former and updated programs

	Former Undergraduate Program (2006)				Updated Undergraduate Program (2018)					
	Compulsory	Elective			Total	Compulsory	Elective			Total
		DSK	PK	GK			SK	PK	GK	
1. Term	9	-	-	-	9	9	-	-	-	9
2. Term	8	-	-	-	8	9	-	-	-	9
3. Term	7	1	-	-	8	8	-	1	1	10
4. Term	8	-	-	-	8	7	1	1	1	10
5. Term	7	-	-	-	7	6	1	1	1	9
6. Term	7	-	-	-	7	5	1	1	1	8
7. Term	5	-	-	1	6	4	2	1	-	7
8. Term	3	2	-	1	6	4	1	1	-	6
Total	54	3	2	59	52	6	6	4	68	

Source: YÖK, 2007b; YÖK, 2018

DSK: Department and Subject Knowledge, PK: Pedagogical Knowledge, GK: General Knowledge, SK: Subject Knowledge

Another noteworthy point concerns elective courses. In the Former Undergraduate Program, 14-week one-term elective courses were devised by academics and added to the curriculum upon approval by the department board, faculty board and Rectorate, respectively. Due to this practice, elective courses with the same content under different codes could be offered to students during the same term (for instance, in tandem with the compulsory New Turkish Literature course, Modern Turkish Literature, Republican era Turkish Literature, etc. were offered as elective courses). Instead of selecting a course with different content, the student could choose an already-available course as an elective where the content was familiar though its code was different. In the Updated Undergraduate Program, however, elective courses were assigned by YÖK; hence it was possible to prevent offering elective courses with different codes but identical or parallel content.

4. Findings and discussion of courses in which hours and credits changed

In Table 4, the corresponding courses in which only the course hours and credits changed in the Updated Undergraduate Program are listed.

Table 4. Courses in which hours and credits changed

Former Undergraduate Program (2006)				Updated Undergraduate Program (2018)			
Course name	T	P	C	Course name	T	P	C
Foreign Language I	3	0	3	Foreign Language I	2	0	2
Introduction to Educational Sciences	3	0	3	Introduction to Education	2	0	2
Foreign Language II	3	0	3	Foreign Language II	2	0	2
Educational Psychology	3	0	3	Educational Psychology	2	0	2
Elective I (Subject Knowledge)	3	0	3	Elective I (Subject Knowledge)	2	0	2
<i>Computer I</i>	2	2	3	<i>Information Technologies</i>	3	0	3
<i>Computer II</i>	2	2	3				
Principles and Methods in Education	3	0	3	Principles and Methods in Education	2	0	2
Turkish Language IV: Sentence Structure	3	0	3	Turkish Language IV	2	0	2
General Linguistics	3	0	3	Linguistics	2	0	2
Effective Communication (Compulsory)	3	0	3	Human Relations and Communication (Elective)	2	0	2
<i>Educational Technologies and Material design</i>	2	2	3	<i>Educational Technologies</i>	2	0	2
				<i>Material design in Turkish Language Education (Elective)</i>	2	0	2
<i>Comprehension Techniques I: Teaching Reading</i>	2	2	3	<i>Teaching Reading</i>	3	0	3
<i>Comprehension Techniques. II: Teaching Listening</i>	2	2	3	<i>Teaching Listening</i>	3	0	3
World Literature	3	0	3	World Literature	2	0	2
<i>Narration Techniques I: Speaking Skills</i>	2	2	3	<i>Speaking Skills</i>	3	0	3
<i>Narration Techniques II: Teaching Writing</i>	2	2	3	<i>Teaching Writing</i>	3	0	3
Teaching of Turkish to Foreigners	2	0	2	Teaching of Turkish as a Foreign Language	3	0	3
Measurement and Evaluation	3	0	3	Measurement and Evaluation in Education	2	0	2
<i>Theater and Drama Practice</i>	2	2	3	<i>Theater and Drama Practice</i>	2	0	2
Guidance & Counseling	3	0	3	Student Counseling in Schools	2	0	2
Elective II (Subject Knowledge)	3	0	3	Elective II (Subject Knowledge)	2	0	2
Total	5	16	65	Total	48	0	48

Source: YÖK, 2007b; YÖK, 2018.

(T: Theoretical course, P: Practical course, C: Credit)

Table 4 shows that the number of theoretical hours (T), practical hours (P) and credits (C) for courses in the Former Undergraduate Program decreased from 303 (TPC) to 202 (TPC) in the Updated Undergraduate Program; hence there was a one hour and one credit decrease in all theoretical courses.

Except for Theater and Drama Practice in the Former Undergraduate Program, courses in which the theoretical and practical hours and credits (TPC) were 223 increased to 303 in the Updated Program, so by eliminating two hours of practice the theoretical hours were increased by one hour while their credits remained the same. In courses that were the backbone of Turkish Education; viz. Teaching Reading, Teaching Listening, Oral Speaking and Teaching Writing, the practical hours were eliminated. This can be considered the wrong approach to adopt.

Another noteworthy point in Table 3 is that in the Former Undergraduate Program, “Teaching of Turkish to Foreigners” had 2 hours (theoretical) and 2 credits but in the Updated Program the course became 3 hours (theoretical) with 3 credits. In the Former Undergraduate Program the course was named “Teaching of Turkish to Foreigners” while in the Updated Undergraduate Program it was re-named “Teaching of Turkish as a Foreign Language”. The rise in course hours and credits can be linked to the recent popularity and greater demand for Teaching of Turkish as a Foreign Language. It is thus evident that the adopted approach for this course is logical and appropriate.

In the Former Undergraduate Program, Theater and Drama Practice was coded as 223 (TPC) but in the Updated Undergraduate Program it was coded as 202 (TPC); hence two hours of practice were eliminated, but at the same time it decreased by one course credit. This decision is contradictory to the course name: Theater and Drama Practice.

In the 2018 Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish it is seen that, except for Social Service Practices, Teaching Practice I and Teaching Practice II, all other courses had fewer practical hours. In the Updated Undergraduate Program, “the lack of a practice hour in the weekly course schedule does not mean no practice, and although there is no practical course hour/credit, in order to meet course objectives students should be motivated to make observations and carry out practice on the course in various environments (school, classroom, outside, laboratory, etc.)” (<http://www.yok.gov.tr/documents/10279/41805112/SSS.pdf>), thus students are encouraged to practice during the educational components course. Nonetheless, it is evident that if practice is not made compulsory, it would be over-optimistic to believe that educational components can truly motivate “practice”.

5. Findings and discussion of courses in which the term changed

Another modification in the 2018 Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish is that the academic term (semester) of a few courses changed (Table 5).

Table 5. Courses of which Academic Term Changed

Former Undergraduate Program (2006)		Updated Undergraduate Program (2018)	
Course name	Term	Course name	Term
Elective I (Subject Knowledge)	3	Elective I (Subject Knowledge)	4
Scientific Research Methods	3	Research Methods in Education *	4
Computer I and II	3 and 4	Information Technologies *	1
Literature for children	5	Literature for children	3
World Literature	5	World Literature	8
Teaching of Turkish to Foreigners	6	Teaching of Turkish as a Foreign Language *	8
History of Turkish Education	6	History of Turkish Education	4
Guidance & Counseling	7	Counseling & Guidance in Schools*	8
Elective I (General Knowledge)	7	Elective I (General Knowledge)	3
Turkish Education system and School Management	8	Turkish Education system and School Management	6
Elective II (Subject Knowledge)	8	Elective II (Subject Knowledge)	5
Elective III (Subject Knowledge)	8	Elective III (Subject Knowledge)	6
Elective II (General Knowledge)	8	Elective II (General Knowledge)	4

Source: YÖK, 2018 * In Updated Program, course names are listed as given above.

Computer I and II courses were unified in one course. Although it was taught during the 3rd and 4th terms in the old program, it was decided to re-name it “Information Technologies” and offer the course during the 1st term in the new program. Since we are living in the age of technology, digital usage now starts as early as pre-school; hence it is a reasonable to offer the Information Technologies course during the 1st term.

In the Former Program, the World Literature course was offered during the 5th term but in the Updated Program it is offered in the 8th term. In the Former Program, the content of the World Literature course was described by the Higher Education Board as “...*practicing critical reading via harnessing clues gained in Teaching Reading course*” (YÖK, 2007b: 92) and in this program the Comprehension Techniques I: Teaching Reading and World Literature courses were offered in the same term. It would be unwise to expect that a student who has not yet learnt reading methods and techniques would be engaged in reading World Literature. Thus it is a feasible approach to shift the World Literature course to the 8th Term.

6. Findings and discussion of courses removed and replaced

Table 6 shows courses removed from the Former Undergraduate Program and new courses added to the Updated Undergraduate Program, or courses of which the substitutes are unclear.

Table 6. Courses removed from Former Undergraduate Program or replaced

Former Undergraduate Program (2006)				Updated Undergraduate Program (2018)			
Course name	T	P	C	Course name	T	P	C
Writing Techniques	1	2	2	-			
Written Expression I	2	0	2	Turkish Language I	3	0	3
Oral Expression I	2	0	2				
Written Expression II	2	0	2	Turkish Language II	3	0	3
Oral Expression II	2	0	2				
Computer I	2	2	3	Information Technologies	3	0	3
Computer II	2	2	3	Educational Technologies	3	0	3
Educational Technologies and Material design	2	2	3	Material design in Turkish Education	2	0	2
Special Teaching methods I	2	2	3	Approaches to Teaching and Learning Turkish	2	0	2
Special Teaching methods II	2	2	3	Turkish Education Programs	2	0	2
				Teaching Grammar	2	0	2
				Teaching Vocabulary	2	0	2
				Assessing in-class Learning	2	0	2
				Exam Preparation and Evaluation in Teaching Turkish	2	0	2
School Experience	1	4	3	Teaching Practice I	2	6	5
Total	20	16	28	Total	28	6	31

Source: YÖK, 2007b; YÖK, 2018

(T: Theoretical course, P: Practical course, C: Credit)

The Writing Techniques course, integral to the 2006 Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish, was removed in the 2018 Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish and was not substituted in the updated program. The course content of the Writing Techniques course was specified by YÖK as: *“The writing concept, fine writing methods and techniques, capital letters, small letters; how to write slanting capital letters, how to write slanting small letters, writing signs and numbers, cursive handwriting, slanting and regular style small and capital letters, composing texts via regular and cursive handwriting, several decorative and antique style writing practices, practicing legible and readable writing”* (YÖK, 2007b, p. 87). As also evidenced in the course content, writing is a crucial course, particularly for students of the Department of Turkish Education. It is therefore a major mistake to remove the course. Also, adding “Teaching Basic Reading and Writing” as an elective course to the Updated Undergraduate Program elevates the gravity of the “Writing Techniques” course; hence removing the relevant course in the Updated Undergraduate Program was not a sound decision.

In the 2018 updated program, the “Turkish 1: Written Expression” and “Turkish 2: Oral Expression” courses were re-named “Turkish Language 1” and “Turkish Language 2”. The content of Turkish Language 1 is divided into written and oral expression and the content of Turkish Language 2 course was reorganized as academic language usage and text writing (YÖK, 2018, p. 18). However, the course content reveals that the Turkish Language I course entails *“Written language and features; writing and punctuation; features of written and oral expression; paragraph organization and paragraph components (introduction, body, concluding paragraphs); developing thinking (explaining, discussion, narration, description, exemplification, evidencing, comparison and similar practices); text structure (structural features of the text, introduction-body-conclusion); textual features (cohesion, consistency; objectivity, acceptability, contextuality, informativity, intertextuality); text writing (drafting, writing, editing and sharing); informative-explanatory text writing; narrative text writing; descriptive text writing; persuasive and argumentative text writing”* (YÖK, 2018, p. 509). The Turkish Language II course content is defined as *“Features of academic language and writing; referencing descriptions, concepts and terms in academic writing; objective and subjective narration; academic texts’ structure and genres (article, report, scientific abstract, etc.); making claims, proposal writing (supporting, opposing or validating an argument); formative features of scientific reports and articles; steps in report writing; explaining, discussion, intertextual relationship, sharing resources (referencing and footnotes, bibliography); writing a title, summarizing, key word writing; ethical principles to observe in scientific texts; practicing of academic text writing”* (YÖK, 2018, p. 510). A closer look at these components reveals there is also an absence of content on the Oral Expression course; hence it is not feasible to claim that the Turkish Language I and Turkish Language II courses also integrate an “Oral expression” course.

It is stated that “In the Teacher Training Undergraduate Program for 2018, Computer 1 and Computer 2 courses have been removed from the program and in their place Information Technologies courses have been added, including current technology usage skills and Teaching Technologies courses incorporating technology usage skills related to education and teaching.” (YÖK, 2018, p. 18).

Another change is related to the “Educational Technologies and Material design” course. In the 2018 Undergraduate Program of Teacher Training, “due its scope there was constant disagreement between department and sub-department branches”. Hence, the course was removed and replaced with an updated *Educational Technologies* course in the new program” (YÖK, 2018, p. 17). It is also stated that units related to material design would be offered “within the context of courses related to teaching of specific content and teaching practice courses” (YÖK, 2018, p. 17). As can be construed from this statement, the Educational Technologies course added to the Updated Undergraduate Program not only replaced the Computer II course but thanks to its updated content, it also replaced the Educational Technologies and Material design course in the former program. Student acquisition in the domain of Material Design can be achieved via the *Material design in Turkish Education* course listed in the pool of Subject Knowledge Elective Courses.

As seen in the 2018 program, Special Teaching Methods I and Special Teaching Methods II courses were removed and these were substituted by new courses that focused on teaching of the relevant domain (YÖK, 2018). In this regard, it is suggested that the Special Teaching Methods I and II courses in Teaching Turkish be substituted with some of the compulsory Subject Knowledge courses, viz. “Learning and Teaching Approaches”, “Teaching of Turkish Program”, “Teaching Grammar”; and from the pool of elective Subject Knowledge courses, it is advisable that use be made of “Teaching Vocabulary”, “Assessing in-class Learning”, “Exam Preparation and Evaluation in Teaching Turkish” courses.

Another change is related to the “School Experience” course. The School Experience course was removed as it no longer achieved any functional purpose and the content of this course was integrated with that of the Teaching Practice I and II course (YÖK, 2018, p. 17). This choice would allow prospective teachers to spend longer hours at school and build up their pre-service experience.

7. Findings and discussion of compulsory courses recently added to Updated Program

In the 2006 Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish, the only linguistic course was “General Linguistics”, but in the 2018 Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish, in addition to this course, a compulsory “Text linguistics” course and elective “Semantics” course (see Table 8) were added. Inclusion of these courses in the Updated Undergraduate Program is a positive approach because “it is impossible to teach all the components of linguistics in only one course. As a supplement to the General Linguistics course, it is also essential to offer lingua courses such as Semantics, Text Linguistics, etc.” (Keklik, 2013, p. 1918).

Table 7. Compulsory courses recently added to Updated Undergraduate Program

Updated Undergraduate Program (2018)					
	Course name	Category	T	P	C
1. Term	Educational Philosophy	PK	2	0	2
2. Term	Educational Sociology	PK	2	0	2
	Key Concepts in Language Education	SK	2	0	2
3. Term	Approaches to Teaching and Learning Turkish	SK	2	0	2
4. Term	Turkish Education Program	SK	2	0	2
5. Term	-	-	-	-	-
6. Term	Text linguistics	SK	2	0	2
7. Term	Teaching Grammar	SK	2	0	2
8. Term	-	-	-	-	-

Source: YÖK, 2018, PK: Pedagogical Knowledge, SK: Subject Knowledge, T: Theoretical course, P: Practical course, C: Credit

In the Turkish Language course of the 2006 Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish, there are four different grammar courses; entitled Knowledge I: Phonetics, Turkish Grammar II: Morphology, Turkish Grammar III: Lexicology, and Turkish Grammar IV: Sentence Knowledge, although there is no independent course to explain how to teach grammar. Grammar and Teaching Grammar have distinctively different focuses. “Grammar is a branch of science that analyzes any language with respect to sound, form and sentence structures in order to arrive at decisive rules on their usage” (Dolunay, 2010, p. 275). However, “Teaching Grammar is the process of helping students sense the sound, form and sentence structures of a language via employing appropriate teaching methods and thereby assisting students to engage in activities that allow an effective, accurate and correct use of language” (Dolunay, 2010, p. 275). In this vein, an analysis of the 2018 Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish shows that, for the first time, an independent course in Teaching Grammar is being offered and this approach is indeed an appropriate and agreeable one.

8. Findings and discussion of elective courses in Updated Program

Data on the elective courses in the 2018 Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish are as shown in Table 8.

Table 8. Elective Courses in 2018 Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish

Field	Course name	
Pedagogical Knowledge, Elective Courses	Open and distance learning	Teaching Hospitalized Children
	Child Psychology	Inclusive Education
	Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorders	Character and Values Education
	Education Law	Comparative Education
	Education Anthropology	Micro Education
	History of Education	Museum Education
	Drama in Education	Outside School Learning Environments
	Extracurricular Activities in Education	Learning Difficulties
	Program Development in Education	Personalization and Adaptation of Education
	Project Development in Education	Sustainable Development and Education
	Critical and Analytical Thinking	Adult Education and Lifelong Learning

General Knowledge, Elective Courses	Addiction and Fight against Addiction	Career Planning and Development
	Nutrition and Health	Culture and Language
	History and Philosophy of Science	Vocational English
	Science and Research Ethics	Art and Aesthetics
	Economy and Entrepreneurship	Turkish Folk Dances
	Traditional Turkish Handicrafts	Turkish Sign Language
	Human Rights and Democracy Education	Turkish Music
	Human Relations and Communication	History of Turkish Art
Subject Knowledge, Elective Courses	Semantics	Vocal training and Diction
	Language Acquisition	Assessing in-class Learning
	Critical Reading	Turkish Coursebook Analysis
	Teaching Turkish to Bilingual Turkish Children	History of Turkish Education
	Teaching Basic Reading & Writing	Material design in Turkish Education
	Teaching Vocabulary	Exam Preparation and Evaluation in Teaching Turkish
	Media Literacy	Creative Writing

Source: YÖK, 2018

In the 2006 Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish, it was resolved to offer students a total of 5 elective courses, 3 of which would be from the pool of Subject Knowledge and 2 from the pool of General Knowledge. In the Former Undergraduate Program there was no information on the specifics of these courses and the selection process was assigned to the relevant department/sub-department. In the 2018 Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish, an elective course pool of 22 Pedagogical Knowledge, 16 General Knowledge and 14 Subject Knowledge courses was created. Although YÖK affirms adding new elective courses to the relevant pools, it also enforces certain restrictions. Accordingly, “in addition to elective courses proposed in the programs, it is possible to add to Pedagogical Knowledge (PK) and Subject Knowledge (SK) elective course pools; a maximum of six courses that parallel students’ interests, needs and requests on condition that the course definitions are specified and notified no later than the last day of March 2019 to YÖK, from whom approval is necessary.” Elective courses to be added to the “Subject Knowledge (SK) elective course pool should be associated with the teaching of a relevant course. There is no limitation on the type of courses added to the General Knowledge (GK) elective course pool and there is also no need to ask for YÖK’s pre-approval” (<http://www.yok.gov.tr/documents/10279/41805112/SSS.pdf>).

According to the Updated Undergraduate Program, throughout their academic year for a period of eight terms, students are required to take 6 Pedagogical Knowledge, 4 General Knowledge and 6 Subject Knowledge elective courses. The Elective course pool, consisting of “Subject Knowledge”, “Pedagogical Knowledge” and “General Knowledge” courses from which students can acquire skills relevant to their interests and needs, are offered starting in the third term. Nonetheless, in the Updated Undergraduate Program, there is no specification about which elective courses are offered in which term and it is also not feasible to group “elective courses within themselves; also they cannot be categorized with respect to the students’ class or academic term”

(<http://www.yok.gov.tr/documents/10279/41805112/SSS.pdf>). Furthermore; “in every academic term it is required to open a minimum of 6 courses from each group of Pedagogical Knowledge (PK), General Knowledge (GK) and Subject Knowledge (SK) elective courses” (<http://www.yok.gov.tr/documents/10279/41805112/SSS.pdf>). Thus, in order to avoid any confusion, the related department and sub-department are given a huge responsibility in the planning stage of the elective courses.

Conclusion and Suggestions

In the curriculum-updating workshops on teacher training held in 1997, 2006 and 2009, the focus point of discussions was predominantly programs on the elementary education stage; aside from pedagogical knowledge courses there were no suggested updates for teaching the secondary education level. In the new template of the faculty, the distinction between elementary education and secondary education was removed from the departmental code and updating workshops were implemented to cover all undergraduate programs (YÖK, 2018, p. 10). In the programs, Pedagogical Knowledge (PK) courses formed 30-35%, General Knowledge (GK) courses 15-20%, and Subject Knowledge (SK) courses 45-50% of the program.

One of the recent undergraduate programs of teacher training brought into effect as of the 2018-2019 academic year is the Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish. In the updated program, Pedagogical Knowledge courses occupy a ratio of 33%, General Knowledge courses 18%, and Subject Knowledge courses constitute 49%. When we make a SWOT analysis of the Turkish Teaching Undergraduate Program for 2018, the strong and weak aspects of this program along with the opportunities it provides and risks it bears are clarified. The strong and weak points, opportunities and risks of the new undergraduate program are listed below:

1. The new undergraduate program being structured on an axis of gaining skills, attitudes, and values,
2. In the new program, “Teaching Application” courses are split into “Teaching Application I” and “Teaching Application II”.
3. New undergraduate programs being harmonized with the Turkish Lesson Teaching Program prepared and put into practice by the Ministry of National Education (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, and 8th classes of Elementary and Junior High Schools).
4. Addition of many new courses aimed at training the students to be better acquainted with subject knowledge,
5. Increasing the number of Pedagogical Teaching Knowledge courses.
6. Preserving previous weight of General Knowledge courses with respect to their number.
7. Formation of a pool of courses with three different options in the areas of Pedagogical Knowledge, Subject Knowledge, and General Knowledge Courses.

The weak aspects of the program can be affirmed as: **a.** A reduction of subject knowledge courses in the new program, both with respect to total theoretical and practical course hours and total credits, compared with the previous program, and **b.** A reduction of practical course hours from 34 to 14 in the new program.

Opportunities provided by the new undergraduate program can be defined as: 1. The opportunity for students to choose 16 optional courses in total during the 6 semi-year periods from the pool of optional courses according to their interests and expectations. 2. Providing the opportunity for students to carry out practice at schools for a longer period during two semesters. 3. The opportunity provided by the Higher Education Council for relevant departments to propose new optional courses for the pool of optional lessons.

The one risk of the new Turkish Teaching undergraduate program is the statement that: *a*. Although the number of application hours of courses is not stated on the weekly course schedule, this does not mean that no practice will be made during the courses.

Proposals made within the frame of the analysis above are as follows:

1. "In Teacher Training, pedagogical knowledge is vital but it should also be noted that no teaching method and technology is capable of teaching something unlearned. Subject knowledge should be further prioritized, concepts should be defined in a constructive manner, and practice should never contradict theory". (Börekçi, 2015, p. 412). In order to elevate subject knowledge competency of prospective graduates of the Teaching Turkish Program, the relevant department should offer and teach novel, compulsory or elective subject knowledge courses not offered in the Undergraduate Program promoted by the Higher Education Board.

2. Another salient factor in Teacher Training is to balance theory and practice in undergraduate programs since preparing prospective teachers for the teaching profession relies heavily on gaining practice. Yet unlike the Former Undergraduate Program, in the Updated Undergraduate Program the practical course hours have decreased from 34 to 14 and in Subject Knowledge courses, the practice hours decreased to nearly zero, which is a significant deficiency. It is suggested that this omission be remedied via elective courses proposed by the relevant department.

References

- Akdemir, A. S. (2013). Türkiye’de öğretmen yetiştirme programlarının tarihçesi ve sorunları [A history of teacher training programmes and their problems in Turkey]. *Turkish Studies - International Periodical of the Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic Languages*, Volume 8/12, 15-28.
- Akyüz, Y. (2005). *Türk Eğitim Tarihi (9. Baskı)* [History of Turkish education (9th ed.)]. Ankara: PegemA Yayıncılık.
- Akyüz, Y. (2006). Türkiye’de öğretmen yetiştirmenin 160. yılında Darülmualimîn’in ilk yıllarına toplu ve yeni bir bakış [A new overall view of the first years of Darülmualimîn (Teacher Training College) on the 160th anniversary of teacher training in Turkey]. *Ankara Üniversitesi Osmanlı Tarihi Araştırma ve Uygulama Merkezi Dergisi*, Sayı: 20, 17-58.
- Altın, H. (2017). Osmanlı eğitim tarihinde Dârülmualimât (açılışı ve gelişim süreci) [Teacher training school for girls in Ottoman educational history (foundation and development)]. *Akademik Matbuat*, Cilt: 1, Sayı: 1, 20-37.

- Atanur Başkan, G. (2001). Öğretmenlik mesleği ve öğretmen yetiştirmede yeniden yapılanma [Teaching profession and re-structuring in teacher education]. Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi, 20, 16-25.
- Atanur Başkan, G., Aydın, A., & Madden, T. (2006). Türkiye'deki öğretmen yetiştirme sistemine karşılaştırmalı bir bakış [A comparative analysis of the Teacher Training system in Turkey]. Çukurova Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, Cilt: 15, Sayı: 1, 35-42.
- Atik Kara, D. & Sağlam, M. (2014). Öğretmenlik meslek bilgisi derslerinin öğrenme-öğretme sürecine yönelik yeterliklerinin kazandırılması yönünden değerlendirilmesi [Evaluation of professional teaching knowledge courses in terms of competencies regarding the learning and teaching process]. Eğitimde Nitel Araştırmalar Dergisi-Journal of Qualitative Research in Education, 2(3), 28-86.
- Börekçi, M. (2015). Bir bilim alanı olarak Türkçe ve Türkçe eğitimi [Turkish and Turkish education as a field of study]. Erzincan Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Dergisi, ÖS-II, 405-414.
- Dolunay, S. K. (2010). Dil bilgisi öğretiminin amacı ve önemi [The aim and the importance of grammar teaching]. TÜBAR, XXVII, 275-284.
- Dursunoğlu, H. (2003). Cumhuriyet döneminde ilköğretime öğretmen yetiştirmenin tarihi gelişimi [Development of training elementary education prospective teachers during the Republican Age]. Milli Eğitim Dergisi, Sayı: 160.
- Güzel, A. (2005). Türkçe Öğretmenliği Ana Bilim Dalı Dört Yıllık Lisans Programı [Four-Year Undergraduate Program of Teaching Turkish]. Eğitim Fakültelerinde Yeniden Yapılandırmanın Sonuçları ve Öğretmen Yetiştirme Sempozyumu, 22-24 Eylül 2005, Gazi Üniversitesi Yayınları, Ankara. 305-310.
- Karaca, E. (2008). Eğitimde kalite arayışları ve eğitim fakültelerinin yeniden yapılandırılması [Quality seeking in education and reorganization of education faculties]. Dumlupınar Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Dergisi, Sayı: 21, 61-80.
- Karasar, N. (2005). Bilimsel araştırma yöntemi (15. Baskı) [Scientific research methods (15th ed.)]. Ankara: Nobel Yayın Dağıtım.
- Kavcar, C. (2002). Cumhuriyet döneminde dal öğretmenleri yetiştirme [Training field teachers during the Republican age]. Ankara Üniversitesi Eğitim Bilimleri Fakültesi Dergisi, Cilt: 35, Sayı: 1-2, 1-14.
- Keklik, S. (2013). Yeni eğitim sistemi (4+4+4) değişikliği kapsamında Türkçe öğretmenliği lisans programının incelenmesi ve öneriler [Investigating the undergraduate Turkish teaching curriculum within the context of the recent educational policy changes (4+4+4) and some suggestions]. Turkish Studies-International Periodical for the Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic, Volume 8/1, 1911-1930.
- Kırkkılıç, A. & Maden, S. (2010). İlköğretim ve lisans programlarındaki değişiklikler sonrasında Türkçe öğretmenliği mesleğinin ve Türkçe eğitimi bölümlerinin durumu [The status of Turkish teaching profession and Turkish education departments following the changes in primary education curriculum and undergraduate schedule]. TÜBAR, XXVII, 477-502.
- Korkmaz, F., Bağçeci, B., Meşe, N. N., & Ünsal, S. (2013). Türkiye'nin öğretmen yetiştirme problemi (1923-1954 yılları arası) [The problem of teacher training in Turkey (from 1923 to 1954)]. Akademik Sosyal Araştırmalar Dergisi, Yıl: 1, Sayı: 1, 155-167.
- Küçükahmet, L. (2007). 2006-2007 Öğretim yılında uygulanmaya başlanan öğretmen yetiştirme lisans programlarının değerlendirilmesi [Analysis of undergraduate program of teacher training effectuated in 2006-2007 academic year]. Türk Eğitim Bilimleri Dergisi, 5(2), 203-218.
- MEB (2010). Cumhuriyet Döneminde Türk Millî Eğitim Sistemindeki Gelişmeler (1920-2010). Ankara: T.C. Millî Eğitim Bakanlığı Strateji Geliştirme Başkanlığı.

- Öztürk, C. (2007). Türkiye’de Öğretmen Yetiştirme ve Eğitimi [Teacher Education and Training in Turkey]. A. Oktay (Ed.), Eğitim Bilimine Giriş [Introduction to Educational Science]. 304-332. Ankara: PegemA Yayıncılık.
- Yıldırım, A., & Şimşek, H. (2008). Sosyal bilimlerde nitel araştırma yöntemleri (6. Baskı) [Qualitative research methods in Social Science (6th ed.)]. Ankara: Seçkin Yayıncılık.
- Yıldırım, O. & Arhan, S. (2017). Öğretmen yetiştirme programlarındaki ders ağırlıklarının karşılaştırılması [The comparison of course hefts in teacher training programs]. Milli Eğitim Dergisi, Sayı: 213, 197-218.
- YÖK (2007a). Öğretmen yetiştirme ve eğitim fakülteleri/öğretmenin üniversitede yetiştirilmesinin değerlendirilmesi (1982-2007) [Teacher training and educational faculties/analyzing training of teachers at universities]. Ankara: Yükseköğretim Kurulu Yayını 2007-5.
- YÖK (2007b). Eğitim fakültesi öğretmen yetiştirme lisans programları. Ankara.
- YÖK (2018). Öğretmen yetiştirme lisans programları [Teacher-Training Undergraduate programs]. Ankara: Ankara Üniversitesi Basımevi Müdürlüğü.
- YÖK, (2006). Eğitim Fakültesi Öğretmen Yetiştirme Lisans Programları. Ankara: Yükseköğretim Kurulu Yayınları.

Internet Sources

- http://dhgm.meb.gov.tr/yayimlar/dergiler/milli_egitim_dergisi/160/dursunoglu.htm (accessed: 20.07.2018)
- <https://www.pegem.net/Akademi/3-8232-Gecmisten-Gunumuze-Turk-Egitim-Sisteminde-Ogretmen-Yetistirme-ve-Gunumuz-Sorunlari.aspx> (accessed: 20.07.2018)
- <http://www.yok.gov.tr/documents/10279/41805112/SSS.pdf> (accessed: 02.12.2018)